

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 06936 141400Z

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 EB-11 SS-20 IGA-02

PRS-01 PM-07 SSO-00 FDRE-00 PC-15 USIE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 DRC-01 AGR-20 INT-08

COME-00 ACDA-19 /224 W

----- 001694

O 141220Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3948

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMSIXTHFLT

DOD WASHDC

UNCLAS TUNIS 6936

FOR DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR

CINCEUR FOR FOREIGN DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR LTC

R. KIMBALL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TASG/ SWEL

SUBJECT: SITREP NO. 1

REF: A. STATE 244125; B. TUNIS 6927

1. WEATHER SITUATION APPEARS TO BE IMPROVING AS OF
NOW AND RAIN THROUGHOUT COUNTRY HAS STOPPED. LOCAL
METEROLOGICAL STATION, HOWEVER, PREDICTING ADDITIONAL
RAIN AN SKY REMAINS OVERCAST AND THREATENING.

2. U OUSH REMAINS ISOLATED AND EXACT SITUATION IN

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PAGE 02 TUNIS 06936 141400Z

AREAS AFFECTED CONTINUES UNKNOWN. LOCAL NEWS MEDIA

REPORT MORNING OF DEC 14 THAT FLOOD SITUATION IS CAUSE FOR SERIOUS CONCERN, BUT NOT CATASTROPHIC. MAIN AREAS AFFECTED, ACCORDING TO MEDIA ARE: SOUTH GAFSA, SIDI BOUZID, EL HAMMA); CENTRAL (KAIROUAL), AND SAHEL (SOUSSE AREA). MEDIA REPORT THAT MOST ROADS AND TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATIONS CUT IN INTERIOR; SEVERAL IMPORTANT BRIDGES WASHED OUT IN SOUSSE AND KAIROUAN GOVERNORATES; LIVESTOCK LOSSES IN SOUTHEAST OASES.

3. SIXTH FLEET NOW IN PROCESS RESPONDING TO OUR REQUEST FOR HELICOPTER RESCUE ASSISTANCE AN CPN/42 HELICOPTER ALREADY EN ROUTE FROM NAPLES AND EXPECTED ARRIVE CARTHAGE-TUNIS AIRPORT 1300 LOCAL TIME. IN ADDITION THREE HELICOPTERS FROM HELO CARRIER IWO JIMA (ONE CH 53 2 CH 46) DUE TO ARRIVE CARTHAGE TUNIS 1530 LOCAL TIME. HELO CARRIER IWO JIMA SCHEDULED ARRIVE SOUSSE EARLY HOURS DEC 15.

4. DISASTER RELIEF COORDINAT GERARD AND COL BUTLER, EMBASSY, USLOT, CURRENTLY WITH TUNISIAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, CARRYING OUT AIR RECONNAISSANCE OF AREA AFFECTED. ON BASIS THEIR REPORTS, AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM GOT, DECISION WILL BE REACHED WHETHER IWO JIMA SHOULD CONTINUE ITS COURSE OR TURN BACK.

5. RESPONSE TO HIGH LEVEL GOT REQUEST FOR FLOOD ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN TO DATE MINIMUM WHICH COULD BE EXPECTED UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES. REFTEL A'S REFERENCE TO HELICOPTER EXPENSE (\$180,000) INCURRECT DURING MARCH 1973 FLOODS CONTRASTS WITH FINAL SIXTH FLEET BILLING FOR ALL EXPENSES (\$79,000). IN ANY EVENT, EMBASSY FULLY AWARE NECESSITY MINIMIZE COST.

6. GLOSSY PHOTOS OF THE FLOODED AREA WILL BE SENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

7. TOP GOT OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR OUR PROMPT ASSISTANCE.
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PAGE 03 TUNIS 06936 141400Z

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISASTER RELIEF, FLOODS, NATURAL DISASTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TUNIS06936
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731223/aaaaaqtm.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 244125; B. TUNIS 6927
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: thigpegh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Nov-2001 by williad>; APPROVED <30-Jan-2002 by thigpegh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SITREP NO. 1
TAGS: SWEL, TS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005